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7 November 1986

Dr. B.V. Kuenssberg,
West Granton Medical Group,
191 Crewe Road North,
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Dear Dr. Kuenssberg,

Thank you for your letter of November 6 in which you state your concern about the way that two patients of yours who have a congenital bleeding diathesis have recently been treated in the Dental Hospital. I have every sympathy with your views and personally feel that at times we are almost over-reacting to the problem of the dental treatment of high risk patients.

I would like however to explain the current procedure in the Dental Hospital. A closed surgery has now been set aside solely for the treatment of high risk patients and in this surgery all precautions are taken for the prevention of transmission of infection, with particular reference to HIV and Hepatitis B virus. This involves staff being masked, gowned, gloved and with plastic sheets on all working surfaces. A problem that then arises is the identification of high risk patients. Dr. Ludlam has advised us that all haemophilia patients should be regarded as high risk patients and he does not wish us to investigate in any way which of these patients are HIV antibody positive or negative. It is because of this advice that all haemophilia patients now attending the Dental Hospital are treated as high risk patients.

I would hope that in the not too distant future, a compromise can be reached, in which the personal feelings of these unfortunate patients can be met and at the same time, the most appropriate method of dental treatment can be carried out. I am taking the liberty of copying this correspondence to Dr. Ludlam.

Yours sincerely,

GRO-C

Professor J.C. Southam,
Dean of Dental Studies

jcs/mrm

c.c. Dr. Ludlam, Haematology Dept.